

Message Text

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42

ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 EURE-00 INRE-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 USIE-00

CIAE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01

PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 IO-10 SCCT-01 SY-05 USSS-00 A-01

OPR-02 CCO-00 /072 W

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O P 241322Z DEC 75

FM AMEMBASSY ATHENS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1886

INFO AMEMASSY ANKARA PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY NICOSIA PRIORITY

AMCONSUL THESSALONIKI PRIORITY

USMISSION UN

USMISSION NATO

DIA

CINCUSNAVEUR

USCINCEUR

CINCUSAREUR

CINCUSAFAE

USDOCOSOUTH

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EO 11652: NA

TAGS: PDIP PINS GR US

SUBJECT: DEATH OF SPECIAL ASSISTANT RICHARD S WELCH:

MEDIA REACTION

REF: A. ATHENS 10112; B. ATHENS 10113; C. ATHENS 10116

1. ALL ATHENS MORNING NEWSPAPERS DEC 24 CARRIED AS THEIR LEAD FRONT PAGE STORY THE MURDER OF THE AMBASSADOR'S SPECIAL ASSISTANT RICHARD S WELCH (REFTELS). BOTH TV CHANNELS ALSO CARRIED THE REPORT ON THEIR MIDNIGHT NEWSCASTS. THE GREEK RADIO DURING LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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THE MORNING OF DEC 24 ALSO REPORTED THE KILLING

AS ITS PRINCIPAL ITEM.

2. FOR THE MOST PART, THE NEWSPAPER COVERAGE OF THE ASSASSINATION WAS FACTUAL, ALTHOUGH ALL BUT COMMUNIST PARTY INTERIOR'S EVGHI MADE REFERENCE TO EARLIER ALLEGATIONS IN THE PRESS THAT DICK WELCH WAS THE CIA STATION CHIEF HERE. NO EDITORIALS HAVE APPEARED THUS FAR. RIZOSPASTIS (COMMUNIST PARTY OF THE EXTERIOR), IN ITS REPORT ON THE ASSASSINATION, CHOSE TO CONNECT THAT EVENT WITH THE ALLEGED FAILURE OF THE GOG TO CARRY OUT ITS RESPONSIBILITIES IN CLEANSING THE STATE MACHINERY OF PRO-JUNTA ELEMENTS AND FOREIGN AGENTS. RIZOSPASTIS COMMENTS THAT THE KILLING SHOWS "THE EXTENT TO WHICH THE DARK FORCES OF FOREIGN SERVICES AND THEIR LOCAL AGENTS ARE UNHARNESSED".

3. AS NOTED ABOVE, MOST NEWSPAPERS IN THEIR REPORTS MENTION THE EARLIER ARTICLE LAST MONTH CARRIED IN THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE ATHENS NEWS BASED ON THE SUPPOSED LETTER FROM THE SO-CALLED "COMMITTEE OF GREEKS AND GREEK-AMERICANS TO PREVENT THE COUNTRY FROM BEING PERVERTED TO THE USES OF THE CIA" (ATHENS 9252). THAT STORY, WHICH LISTED WELCH AS THE CIA STATION CHIEF IN ATHENS, WAS PICKED UP WIDELY BY THE GREEK LANGUAGE PRESS AS WELL. IT ALSO LISTED NAMES OF SIX OTHER AMERICAN OFFICIALS ALLEGEDLY CONNECTED WITH THE CIA, AND IN ALL CASES LISTED THE PHONE NUMBERS AND ADDRESSES OF THOSE MENTIONED, INCLUDING WELCH'S.

4. REPRESENTATIVE HEADLINES OF THE GREEK LANGUAGE NEWSPAPERS FOLLOW: TO VIMA (LIBERAL-OPPOSITION) "MASKED MEN KILLED THE SPECIAL ASSISTANT OF THE AMERICAN AMBASSADOR - THE VICTIM RICHARD WELCH WAS MENTIONED AS THE CHIEF OF THE CIA IN GREECE"; KATHIMERINI (PRO-GOVERNMENT) "ASSISTANT TO THE AMERICAN AMBASSADOR ASSASSINATED DURING THE NIGHT IN PSYCHICO -- NAME OF VICTIM MENTIONED IN LIST OF CIA AGENTS; AKROPOLIS (PRO GOVT) CHIEF OF CIA IN ATHENS ASSASSINATED -- THE KILLERS VANISHED"; ETHNIKOS KIRYX (RIGHT WING) THE HEAD OF THE CIA IN LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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GREECE WAS ASSASSINATED"; ELEFTHEROS KOSMOS (EXTREME RIGHT WING) ASSISTANT TO AMERICAN AMBASSADOR ASSASSINATED -- HE WAS MENTIONED AS CHIEF OF THE CIA BRANCH IN ATHENS; AVGHI (COMMUNIST PARTY INTERIOR) "MASKED MEN ASSASSINATED THE ADVISOR OF AMBASSADOR KUBISCH". IN THE AVGHI ACCOUNT, THE COMMENT WAS MADE THAT "THE MURDER OF THE AMERICAN DIPLOMAT APPEARS TO BE THE RESULT OF AN ORGANIZED PLAN"; THE REPORT ALSO

NOTES THAT "GIVEN THE PROVOCATIVE CHARACTER AND NATURE OF THE ACT, NEGATIVE POLITICAL AND DIPLOMATIC REPERCUSSIONS ARE POSSIBLE." THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE ATHENS NEWS CARRIED THE WELCH MURDER AS ITS LEAD STORY UNDER THE HEADLINE "US EMBASSY AIDE ASSASSINATED". THE OTHER ENGLISH LANGUAGE DAILY -- THE ATHENS POST -- CARRIED THE ITEM AS A 'STOP THE PRESS' INSERT AND GAVE ONLY CAPSULE COVERAGE OF THE FACTS.

5. A SUBSEQUENT TELEGRAM WILL COVER REPORTS AS PRESENTED IN THE AFTERNOON PRESS.

KUBISCH

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Message Attributes

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